## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

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INTERIOR DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE IN KANSAS

A major step leading to the establishment of the new Flint Hills National Wildlife Refuge in Kansas was announced today by Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, following his approval of a general plan for wildlife management on land and water areas within the John Redmond Dam and Reservoir project in southeastern Kansas.

The plan previously had been approved by the Secretary of the Army and by the Director, Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission.

Under the general plan, the Corps of Engineers will make available approximately 18,500 acres of land acquired for the project to the Interior Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife for refuge development. The acquisition of 3,720 additional acres has been recommended to Congress for more effective management of the new refuge area.

The John Redmond Dam and Reservoir project is located on the Grand (Neosho) River, approximately two miles northwest of Burlington, Kansas. It is on an important flight path for migrating ducks and geese. Large flocks of canvasback ducks as well as snow and blue geese move through the Grand River Valley in the spring and fall. Sizable numbers of mallards, green-winged teal, scaup, ruddy ducks, and Canada geese are also found in the project area during migration. The project site provides an ideal location for a refuge where a void had previously existed in the distribution pattern of Federal and State wildlife areas.

The reservoir will be a large, relatively shallow, body of water. With proper management, the area can be expected to attract large concentrations of waterfowl, especially snow and blue geese, mallards, and diving ducks. Development of the area as a refuge will better distribute waterfowl in the flyway, providing increased waterfowl hunting in an area where hunting opportunities are generally limited.

General plans are called for under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, which requires that wildlife interests be considered on water development projects. The Act further provides that general plans must be entered into by the project construction agency, the State wildlife agency, and the Department of the Interior.